



**Florida House of Representatives  
Carlos Lopez-Cantera  
Majority Whip  
District 113**

District Office:  
2300 Coral Way  
Suite 111  
Miami, FL 33145  
(305) 442-6877

Tallahassee Office:  
323 The Capitol  
402 S. Monroe Street  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1300  
(850) 488-4202

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
May 1, 2009

**CONTACT:** Joseph Ruiz  
(850) 488-4202

**REP. LOPEZ-CANTERA'S BILL TO PROTECT  
FLORIDA HOMEOWNERS PASSES THROUGH THE  
LEGISLATURE**

**TALLAHASSEE** – Today the Florida Legislature passed House Bill 521 sponsored by House Majority Whip Carlos Lopez-Cantera (R-Miami), which will level the playing field between property appraisers and Florida's homeowners.

"During difficult economic times, it's vital that we use every opportunity available to us to provide fairness and relief to Florida taxpayers," Lopez-Cantera said. "The current property appraisal system is weighted heavily in favor of government at the expense of taxpayers, and it needed to change."

House Bill 521 maintains that a property appraiser's assessment is presumed to be correct, but only if he or she show, by a preponderance of the evidence, that the assessment was arrived at by complying with applicable Florida Statute and professionally accepted practices. If that standard is met, then the burden will shift to the party initiating the challenge to show, by a preponderance of the evidence, that the appraisal does not represent the just value of the property, does not represent the classified use value or fractional value of the property, or that the appraisal is arbitrarily based on appraisal practices that are different from appraisal practices applied to comparable property within the same county.

(More)

“This bill finishes the good work started by the Legislature over a decade ago,” continued Lopez-Cantera, referring to legislation passed by the Legislature in 1996 but vetoed by then-Governor Lawton Chiles. “Some appraisers have said that this legislation is unnecessary because the current system works. I beg to differ. In the five counties where homeowners are the most frustrated and have challenged their assessments the most often, they are successful less than 15 percent of the time. This bill will now level the playing field.”

House Bill 521 was sponsored in the Senate by Mike Fasano (R-New Port Richey). It now awaits the Governor’s signature.

###